

Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR MRN ONLY (10775 VICE 10774)

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR ASEC MX
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT-ELECT REQUESTS TRAINING FOR SECURITY DETAIL

REF STATE 208588

1. SUMMARY: WE HAVE BEEN REQUESTED BY PRESIDENT-ELECT HIMSELF TO PROVIDE TRAINING. WE RECOGNIZE DEPT'S CONCERNS DERIVING FROM RUMORS AND SPECULATIONS WE HAVE REPORTED TO EFFECT THAT ECHEVERRIA MAY EVEN CONTEMPLATE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT PRIOR TO INAUGURATION IN ORDER TO EXTEND HIS OWN TENURE OF OFFICE. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THESE RUMORS AND CONCERNS ARE EXAGGERATED AND FOR REASONS SET FORTH BELOW, IN ANSWERING OF DEPT'S QUESTIONS, WE RECOMMEND WE SHOULD RESPOND FAVORABLY TO PRESIDENT ELECT'S REQUEST AND THAT DIKEOS AND HICKEY SHOULD COME WITHOUT DELAY. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING ARE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED PARA 2
REFTEL:

A. TRAINING FOR ECHEVERRIA'S SECURITY FORCES OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE OCCURRED WITHIN LAST CALENDAR YEAR - NOT PRIOR TO HIS INAUGURATION.

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B. AS NOTED MEXICO 10703 OUR CONTACT WITH REGARD TO THIS TRAINING IF LTCOL GODINEZ, DEPUTY CHIEF PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL STAFF. THIS OFFICER IS THE NUMBER TWO IN ECHEVERRIA'S MILITARY HOUSEHOLD, WHO HAS BEEN SECONDED TO LOPEZ PORTILLO TO HANDLE LATTER'S SECURITY MATTERS. WE CONSIDER THAT GODINEZ' IS AN "APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT", CLOSE TO ECHEVERRIA, AND THAT BY INFORMING HIM WE HAVE DONE OUR DUTY BY GOM. ADDITIONALLY, IN REVIEWING MATTER WITH DEA REGIONAL DIRECTOR FRIAS TO WHOM THE APPROACH WAS MADE, HE ASSURES US THAT AT NO TIME WAS HE ACTUALLY TOLD THAT THE MATTER SHOULD BE KEPT SECRET FROM ECHEVERRIA OR OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE GOM. FRIAS WAS TOLD, HOWEVER, THAT FACT OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT SHOULD BE HANDLED WITH DISCRETION. ACCORDINGLY WE DO NOT SEE THIS AS A PROBLEM.

C. WE WOULD CAUTION AGAINST OVERREACTION TO RUMORS AND SPECULATION WE HAVE REPORTED RE ECHEVERRIA/LOPEZ-PORTILLO RELATIONSHIP. AFTER ALL, THE TWO MEN APPEAR TO BE WORKING TOGETHER REGULARLY AND THE ONLY POSTURE FOR US TO ASSUME IS THAT A NORMAL PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION WILL TAKE PLACE, AS INDEED WE EXPECT IT WILL, RUMORS NOTWITHSTANDING. IN ANY CASE, IF ECHEVERRIA IS IN FACT SEEKING AN OPTION TO RELINQUISHING POWER, IT WOULD SERVE OUR INTERESTS TO STRENGTHEN LOPEZ PORTILLOS' SECURITY TO THE EXTENT WE CAN.

2. I URGE THAT DIKEOS AND HICKEY PROCEED WITH THEIR VISIT IMMEDIATELY. THEIR SURVEY AND DISCUSSIONS HERE WILL GIVE US FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE IS ANYTHING ELSE WE NEED TO DO RE CONCERNS NOTED REFTEL BEFORE ACTUAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES COMMENCE. THEIR ARRIVAL IN TIME TO MAKE CONTACT WITH LTCOL GODONEZ PRIOR TO MY BREAKFAST WITH LOPEZ PORTILLO TUESDAY MORNING WOULD ALLOW ME TO BUILD ON THIS EVIDENCE OF OUR RESPONSIVENESS TO HIS NEEDS AND PERMIT ME TO CLEAR UP DIRECTLY WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT ANY UNCERTAINTIES WHICH MAY ARISE IN THEIR INITIAL TALKS.

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